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FOR THE RELIGIOUS MONITOR.

Remarks on the last letter from the Reformed, to the Associate Synod.

The celebrated Boccacini, in his *Secretaria di Apollo*, relates the following story, which is both amusing and instructive; and it serves to shew the opinion which that judicious writer entertained of those critics, who cavil without cause, at the writings of distinguished authors: "A famous critic, having gathered together all the faults of an eminent poet, made a present of them to Apollo, who received them very graciously, and resolved to make the author a suitable return for the trouble he had been at, in collecting them. In order to this, he set before him a sack of wheat, as it had been just thrashed out of the sheaf. He then bid him pick out the chaff, from among the corn, and lay it aside by itself. The critic applied himself to the task with great industry and pleasure, and after having made the due separation, was presented, by Apollo, the chaff for his pains." One would be led to suppose that the Reformed Synod had undertaken such a task, as Apollo is made to assign to the critic, in the story, when they attempted to criticise the writings of Mr. Gib, and others, in the manner they have done in their letter. They have picked out a few phrases, from different parts of these writings, without any regard to their general character, and design; and then, by tacking them together, they have endeavoured to deduce from them, sentiments quite different from those which they were obviously intended to express. This, I hope, will be made to appear, to the entire satisfaction of the reader, in the course of the observations which I have to make, on the last letter from the Reformed, to the Associate Synod, and to which I now invite his attention.

In this letter, (which may be seen at length, in the Minutes of the Reformed Synod, pp. 200—211; or, in the Religious Monitor, Vol. vi. pp. 160—168,) the Reformed Synod, in acknowledging the letter they had received from the Associate Synod, say, that in it “a Christian spirit seems to breathe.”—Now, I think it is *very doubtful whether* the Associate Synod, were they so disposed, could consistently return the compliment. It may be safely left with the reader, to say, whether they could approve of the spirit of this letter, without allowing the justice of some of those aspersions, with which the Reformed Synod have attempted to besprinkle them. They, indeed, disclaim all bitterness of spirit; and, although the absence of such a spirit may be ascertained, with full as much certainty, by actions as by words; nevertheless, I am disposed to pass this over without any very particular notice, inasmuch as they say, in another part of their letter, that “it is difficult to manage any thing of this nature, without seeming harshness.” As our Reformed brethren are so well aware of this difficulty, we shall be encouraged to use the greater freedom of remark, without any apprehension of giving them offence.

The Associate Synod had complained, that Reformed Presbyterians had imputed to them objectionable tenets, without so much as quoting their words, which were supposed to express them; and they had also intimated to them, that by their words, must be understood the words of their judicial deeds, or their subordinate standards. To this, the Reformed Synod say, in reply that it was never proposed to quote their words;—that they were writing a historical sketch of their sentiments, according to their own views and understanding of them, and that they did not feel themselves obliged to be confined to such publications as they had designated *judicial deeds*. Now, in the first place, if the reader will just look into the Reformed Testimony, he will see that the six tenets in question, are accompanied with marks of quotation, as is usual only when the precise words are copied from a book. But, if the Reformed Synod never proposed to quote the words of Seceders, why did they use these marks (“”), which must have led every body, who saw them, to believe that the words were quoted from the subordinate standards of the Associate church? Surely, if they did not propose to quote their words, they must have a way of doing business of this kind peculiar to themselves, and entirely different from the rest of mankind. In the second place, they say, “we were writing a historical sketch of your sentiments, according to our views and understanding of them.” So, then, it comes out, at length, that the Reformed Synod, in the passage re-

ferred to, did not give the sentiments of Seceders at all, but their own views and understanding of *their* sentiments. This is precisely the evil complained of; and it is thought very unfair in them, to speak of their own views and understandings, as if they had been the sentiments of the Associate Synod.—When we find our Reformed brethren, making such an admission as this, I think no one will be surprised at the misrepresentations of which they have been guilty. And, lastly, they say they do not feel themselves obliged to be confined to such publications as the Associate Synod have designated *judicial deeds*. The subordinate standards of a church, among other uses, serve to shew what are the religious principles of her members; and I believe it would be considered discourteous, as well as unjust, to impute to them principles which they do not contain, without giving some good reason for doing so. The Associate Synod, accordingly, felt themselves justified in proposing to their Reformed brethren, that they should confine themselves to their judicial deeds, in case they should attempt to vindicate their misrepresentations. They thought fit to exclude the writings of individuals; because, however excellent many of these may be, it was not to be supposed that that body could be responsible for writings, some of which they might not have seen, nor examined, and of course could not have sanctioned. But to these deeds, the Reformed Synod refuse to be confined; and the reason they assign for this singular refusal, is, that the Synod have sanctioned other writers, besides those to which they proposed to confine them. But, on reflection, it will be seen that this is a mere pretence; for the Synod have sanctioned no writers whatever. They have, indeed, in some instances, used the words of other writers; but they have not, by doing so, sanctioned their writings, further than they have used their words; and all this is included in their judicial deeds, so that they have all before them that the Synod has sanctioned.—But such an observation as this, comes very awkwardly from the Reformed Synod, after what they have said in their Testimony. They have, in that instrument, confined themselves within as narrow limits, as could be desired. If the reader will just look into Reformation Principles Exhibited, Part I. page 114, he will find the following passage:—"Such were the arguments of the Seceder disputants. In order to preserve consistency, they were led to maintain the following sentiments; and, as a church, to embody them in their ecclesiastical standards." These are the *words* of the Reformed Synod. Then immediately follow, the six tenets, which, in their Testimony, they call the sentiments of Seceders; but which, in their letter, they admit to be only their own views

and understanding of them. By this, it must be evident that the Reformed Synod have no cause to complain of being confined to the judicial deeds of Seceders, because they have already confined themselves to these very deeds. By their own Testimony, the matters now in controversy, are limited to what is embodied in the ecclesiastical standards of the Associate church. It must, then, be altogether impertinent to quote Gib, and Brown, and Fisher, and Erskine, or even Donaldson * on Common Mercies; unless they can prove, that what they have written, has been embodied in these standards; and if they can do this, why cannot they as well quote the standards themselves?

The Reformed Synod, say further, that they have not distinguished between the Burghers and Anti-Burghers; and, because each claims to be the Secession, they consider themselves at full liberty to avail themselves of the publications of both parties. Though Seceders be now a numerous people,† and, although they differ in some things, yet I am not aware that there was any material difference between the Burghers and Anti-Burghers, in their views, on the subject of civil government; and therefore, this section might have been passed over without any remark, were it not for the extraordinary pretension advanced in it. The Burghers and Anti-Burghers were two distinct religious communities. They had no connection with one another, nor had the one party any controul over the other; and, of course, they could not be responsible for each other's deeds. Yet, the Reformed Synod say, they feel themselves at full liberty to avail themselves of the publications of both parties. To this, no one could have any reasonable objection, provided they availed themselves of the publications of the Burgher Synod, to prove what were the principles of the Burghers; or, of the publications of the Anti-Burgher Synod, to prove what were the principles of

* The writer of this article has never seen Donaldson on Common Mercies, but he judges he must be an author very much to the minds of the Reformed Synod, or else that reverend body must have been very much pressed for authorities; since this work, which was written within these few years, is quoted to prove what is supposed, in the Reformed Testimony, to have been written more than "sixty years since"!!

† In the several branches of the Secession church, in which there were only four ministers, ninety-six years ago, there are now between seven and eight hundred congregations: viz. 340 belonging to the United Secession church in Scotland;—52 belonging to the original Burghers;—33 belonging to the Associate Synod of Original Seceders;—112 Seceder congregations in Ireland; 40 in British America, and 143 belonging to the Associate church in the United States. Those in America, however, are generally small. It would be altogether absurd for the Associate Synod of North America to undertake to answer for all that may have been written by any individual belonging to any of these denominations of Seceders.

the Anti-Burghers. But the Reformed Synod avail themselves of these publications for a very different purpose; even to prove that if any sentiment was held by the Burghers, that then it must necessarily have been held by the Anti-Burghers also, although they were a distinct body. That is to say, they hold the one body to be responsible for the deeds of the other, although they were as innocent of them as the Reformed Synod itself. Surely nothing can be more unreasonable and unjust. And the reason they assign for this strange behaviour, is, that they have not thought fit to distinguish between them. This is only to make one injury an excuse for another. For, if they have not distinguished between the two bodies, it is manifest that truth required that they should have distinguished between them, before they undertook to write about Seceders in the way they have done. By this same kind of authority, it would be easy to prove that the Reformed Synod is tainted with the Arminian error of universal redemption. There was a time when there were two Reformed Presbyteries in Scotland, each of which claimed to be the Reformed Presbytery. One of these Reformed Presbyteries was infected with this heresy, and by using the logic of the Reformed Synod, if we did not distinguish between these two Presbyteries, then it would follow that Reformed Presbyterians hold the erroneous doctrine of universal Redemption. I would not have detained the reader with such a quibble as this, were it not that Reformed Presbyterians are famous for this sort of logic; but I have no doubt they will see how weak it is, when applied to themselves; and, that it is utterly absurd to impute such principles to Seceders, upon no better grounds than this.

But I shall now proceed to consider the reasons which the Reformed Synod have assigned in their letter, for ascribing to Seceders, the sentiments of which they have complained. Here it is worthy of notice, that they have not taken each of the six tenets complained of, separately, and then referred to that part of the standards of the Associate church, whence it was taken, so that the matter in dispute might have been at once determined. This would have been the most direct, if not the only way, of proving satisfactorily, that such a tenet was held by Seceders. This was the evidence that the Associate Synod required; and it is reasonable to suppose that they would have, at least, attempted to produce it, provided they could have found any thing in the standards of the Associate church, that would have answered the purpose. But not finding any thing of this kind, in these standards, they have thought fit to make a few garbled extracts from the Associate Presbytery's Declaration and Defence, as given by

Mr. Gib, in his *Display of Secession Testimony*; and then, to infer from these extracts, that Seceders hold the three first tenets which they have unjustly ascribed to them. Now, as the Reformed Synod have failed to produce, from the standards of the Associate church, any of those tenets, which they affirm in their Testimony to be embodied in these standards; but have produced in place of them only some inferences of their own, surely the only reasonable conclusion to be drawn from this, is, that the Reformed Synod have fabricated these objectionable tenets which they have ascribed to Seceders.—Here, I might rest the case, were it necessary; for enough has been said to shew that the Reformed Synod have entirely failed to substantiate their charges. But, out of pure charity to the Reformed body, I will subjoin a few remarks, to shew them that they have made a very unwarrantable use of that work from which they have taken the extracts in question. They have, in fact, attempted to deduce from it sentiments directly opposite to those which it was manifestly intended to inculcate.

This work is entitled a Declaration and Defence of the Associate Presbytery's Principles, anent the (then, 1743) present civil government. It is one of the best treatises that has been published on the subject; but it ought not to be judged by partial extracts, selected without regard to connexion, or the scope of the authors. For by such means the best book in the world has been perverted to very unworthy ends, and has been used to establish sentiments which it was never intended to convey.* It will, therefore, be necessary to give a brief outline of the contents of this book, that those readers who may not have seen it, may be able to understand the real meaning of the extracts taken from it by the Reformed Synod. It is an exhibition of the Associate Presbytery's principles,

* It has been told of Mr. Ferguson of Edinburgh, that he once travelled in company with a person who was remarkable for advancing very objectionable tenets, and for attempting to establish them by expressions taken from the Bible; asking, at the same time, "is not that scripture?" To one of these interrogations, the astronomer replied, that it was, indeed, the language of scripture, but not the sentiment intended to be conveyed by it. He then intimated to his fellow traveller, that if he would allow him to quote scripture in the manner he had done, by detached sentences and parts of sentences, he would undertake to prove from scripture almost any thing he pleased, and even to shew that it was incumbent on him to go and hang himself. At this, his antagonist expressed some surprise, and challenged him to the proof.—Ferguson replied by repeating the following words: "He cast down the pieces of silver, in the temple, and departed and went and hanged himself;" asking if it was not scripture? To which the other readily assented. He then added these words, "Go and do thou likewise:" which no one could deny were also the words of scripture. Thus he shewed his less experienced fellow-traveller, how easy it was to convey sentiments directly opposed to scripture, in the very words of scripture.

on the head of civil government. In it they lay down certain general principles, with the view to explain the kind of government of which they approve, and then attempt to inculcate the duty of yielding obedience to such a government, in lawful things, for conscience sake.

The following are some of the general principles laid down by the Associate Presbytery, in this Treatise :

1. The connexion between magistrates and the people, is of the nature of a contract, and the people, considered collectively, are not in a state of subjection. They say that when the chief magistrate does not fulfil his obligations, and refuses to be reformed, the people are warranted to lay him aside.—“The politic body is a party voluntarily contracting with the king, and their continued concern with him, is anent the observation of a contract—not anent the yielding of subjection.”¹ More to the same effect might be quoted, but this is sufficient to shew that the Associate Presbytery were the staunch friends of a constitutional government.

2. They pled for all that is incumbent on magistrates, by the covenants of their reforming ancestors. This serves to shew the sort of constitution of which the Presbytery approved. “There is nothing, this way, incumbent upon them (i. e. magistrates) by the word of God or our covenants, which the Presbytery do not acknowledge and plead for.”² They moreover maintained a stated testimony for the ancient civil reformation, and against all defections and apostacy from it.

3. The third principle is, that civil government, both in its constitution and administration, should be agreeable to the word of God. “It is incumbent upon every civil state, whereinto Christianity is introduced, to study and bring to pass—that civil government, in all the appurtenances of its constitution and administration, run in agreeableness to the word of God, be subservient unto the spiritual kingdom of Jesus Christ, and to the interests of the true religion and reformation of the church.”³ With this passage, taken from the Associate Presbytery’s Defence, the reader is requested to compare the first principle imputed to the Associate church, by the Reformed Synod, in their letter—“Nations favoured with the light of Divine revelation are not under a positive and indispensable obligation to form their civil government by it, as the supreme standard”⁴—and he will see that the principle ascribed to them, is directly opposed to the one they hold.

4. A fourth principle held by the Associate Presbytery and laid down in this Treatise, is, that the commands of no ma-

(1) Display, p. 276.

(2) Id. 291.

(3) Id. 286.

(4) Reformed Synod’s last letter.

gistrate ought to be obeyed, that are inconsistent with the commands of God. They say that any obedience they plead for, even to lawful magistrates, "doth only respect things lawful,"* and they maintain that persons may, and ought, to defend themselves against the oppression of rulers, as our ancestors at Pentland and Bothwell."⁵ How unlike is this to the second tenet unjustly ascribed to them by the Reformed Synod! viz. "That if the sanction or the consent of the majority be obtained, that will legitimate their government, and the substance of their deed must be considered, as agreeable to the preceptive will of God, let the conditions otherwise be as sinful as they may."⁶

5. The Associate Presbytery laid it down as another principle, that the authority of usurpers, or habitual tyrants, ought not to be owned. They say, "mere usurpers can have no lawful authority." They say also, that, although persons may be obliged to live orderly under usurpers and tyrants, yet there should be no acknowledgment of their authority, as binding on the conscience.⁷ Compare this statement, taken from the Defence, with the third principle ascribed to Seceders, in the Reformed Synod's last letter, and it is diametrically opposite. i. e. "There is no such thing as tyranny in any government on earth. If the government exists, it is by the providence of God, and therefore his ordinance. Every providential government is also preceptive."⁸

The above statements are faithfully extracted from the Associate Presbytery's Declaration and Defence, as given by Gib, in his Display of the Secession Testimony: and the three principles unjustly ascribed to the Associate church, are also faithfully copied from the last letter of the Reformed Synod to the Associate Synod of North America. By these extracts, the judicious reader may see, at a single glance, that the Reformed Synod have not only imputed these principles to Seceders, without any just grounds, but in the face of their most solemn declarations to the contrary. Seceders never held any such principles, neither do I believe that they were ever held by any Christian society whatever, nor is it likely that they ever had any existence, except in the imaginations and writings of Reformed Presbyterians. It is no very desirable thing for Seceders to have such slanderous misrepresentations of their principles published and circulated to their discredit; but it is better to be the subjects of such reproaches than to

* By "*things lawful*," is meant things agreeable to the law of God.—*Display*.

(5) Display, 290.

(7) Display, 290.

(9) John, xv. 25.

(6) Reformed Synod's last letter.

(8) Ref. Synod's last letter to the Ass. Synod.

be the authors of them. Those who were better⁹ than they, have been reproached without a cause; and the apostle has said, "for it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing than for evil-doing."¹⁰ The words of our Lord also, are full of consolation to persons in such circumstances. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you *falsely* for my sake."¹¹

But what are we to think of the conduct of the Reformed Synod, in persisting in this sinful conduct, notwithstanding all attempts to reclaim them? Surely this is but sorry evidence of Reformation. But we will not bring "a railing accusation against them." We will not "recompense evil for evil;" nor say, "I will do so to him as he hath done to me." On the contrary, we would render good for evil. And I know no better service that can be done to them, than to recommend to them a careful consideration of the sins forbidden in the ninth commandment, as these are set forth in the larger Catechism. We might also invite them to take notice of the Apostle Peter's dissuasion from evil speaking—1 Pet. ii. 1.—and Paul's advice to Titus to reprove the Cretians. Titus, i. 10—13. In a word, we would remind them that we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ; a believing view of which, saith one, should silence all unjust reproaches.

Having thus briefly considered some of the principles laid down in the book entitled, the Associate Presbytery's Declaration, &c. and shewn that the principles of Seceders stand directly opposed to those imputed to them by the Reformed Synod, it will be proper next to proceed to their Defence, which constitutes the second section of their Treatise; but this must be the subject of another communication.

A. H.

December 22, 1829.

FOR THE RELIGIOUS MONITOR.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

[Continued from page 352.]

First: We have no signs of the Millennium, as come, or just about to commence. Herein I shall differ from many, esteemed learned and pious, in the present age; and from some that have gone to their rest. It becomes me therefore to give reasons, with this pledge, that if they can be fairly answered, I shall concur with the prevailing sentiment on this subject, and say that it is come, but only that we have misunderstood

(10) 1 Pet. iii. 17.

(11) Matt. v. 11.

its nature; for instead of being a time of unexampled spiritual prosperity, it is just the reverse. It is not necessary to go into a full detail, to see whether it is come, or just about to come, or not. It will be enough to enquire, whether some of its chief characteristics are to be found in the present generation of professors, or likely to be found in their children. To say nothing of the Pope, still on his seat, and Popery greatly increasing, which is undeniable; or, of Satan still going at large, deceiving, with as much success, the nations, as ever he has done, I shall confine myself to one thing only: viz: the character which the Christians of that time shall sustain. We find it, Rev. xx. 4—"And I saw the *souls* of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark in their foreheads, or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." This verse is allowed, on all hands, to speak as distinctly and expressly of the Millennium as any in the Bible. They who expect, from this verse, a literal and proper resurrection of the Martyrs, cannot hold it to be come, until that event takes place; and, therefore, cannot pretend that it is yet come. But perhaps their's is not the most generally received opinion; and, therefore, this objection will not, with the generality, have any weight. But this one thing must be granted, by all, that before that state of the church can be come, there must be on the earth, a great body of professors answering to this character. The only other view that can be taken of it, is, that they shall be men of the same spirit with the Martyrs. And this seems very plainly to be the meaning. For, besides the incompatibility of a proper resurrection of the Martyrs, with Christ continuing in heaven till the restitution of all things,—with their own happiness in a pure fellowship, and with the comfort of militant saints, John does not say that he saw their *bodies*, or that he saw them personally, but their *souls* only. Nor can we suppose that he means us to understand, by this term, the spirits of those very men who were martyred in the days of bloody persecution. For them to leave paradise and come down to the earth to mingle with imperfect saints, would be a sentiment without authority from revelation, and altogether contrary to reason. Besides, how would it sound, if applied to spirits—"and they *lived* and *reigned* with Christ a *thousand years*. Was there a time, since their martyrdom, in which they *did not* live and reign with Christ? Will they cease to do so again, when the thousand years are finished? If by the spirits of the Martyrs be meant—"the spirits of just men made perfect"—it is telling nothing at all, to tell us, (verse 6,) "over such

the second death hath no power." But I consider what is said of John the Baptist—"And he shall go before him in the *power and spirit of Elias*"—(Luke, i. 17,) a key for explaining the meaning here. It was foretold that before Christ should appear, Elias must first come. Many understood this properly, of Elias; but we have the best authority for understanding it of the Baptist, in the power and spirit of that zealous, holy prophet. As a characteristic of the Millennium, therefore, we are to look for men, and not a few of them, in the "spirit and power" of the Martyrs. Men that would neither touch, taste, nor handle, or make the very smallest and easiest compromise with the apostatising party. Men that would not hold their tongues on disputed points;—that neither friends could persuade, nor foes intimidate, from doing their duty;—that, rather than give up an iota of the testimony of Jesus, or the word of God, would submit to have their *heads struck off*. Read the history of popish persecution, and you will find that their sufferings, were such as makes the blood run chill only to imagine, for the sake of things that are now accounted not worth the life of a fly. Now, I demand of them, who say that the Millennium is come—Where are such men as these? Are they to be found, the most numerous and conspicuous class, in any place, in the known world? "Oh, but our aged fathers, and most learned divines say, that these men were *fools*, that throw away their lives for nothing, which was little short of self-murder." Well, leaving that to be settled between them and Him who speaks in the 4th, 5th and 6th verses of this chapter,—I say there is just so wide a difference between Millennial times and our own. What will then be accounted incomparably more precious *than life*, is, at present, considered such contemptible bigotry, as deserves not once to be named, or known, except to be detested. And the children, for ought that appears, approve what their fathers have fondly said. There is no sign of a Millennial spirit among them. There is no diligence used to impress them with the importance of the testimony of Jesus: far from it. The old formularies of precious truth, and the old way of teaching them, the glory of other times, are both laid aside for a few general, undefined, camelion notions, about religion; to which, the very devil himself has hardly any thing to object. And these are taught in a manner, as unauthorized by scripture, as it is novel in the church. The fathers of this present generation, have despised and cast away the testimony, for the present truth; but the children, who will be the next generation of professors, do not so, for they know nothing at all about it. Reformation principles, "holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering," are not

in their vocabulary. If you complain of innovation, they laugh, and pity you, as the dupe of ignorance and prejudice. If you mention any of those points of truth, for which a despised remnant hath lifted up a feeble voice, and made something like a last struggle; they know not what you say;—they stare as if you spoke in a strange tongue. Without a miracle, we cannot expect them to manifest, in their day, the spirit and power of the Martyrs. There is no sign, either that it is come, or *just about* to come. Let none, therefore, expect that I am to speak of any such good sign.

Second: There is no sign of the increase of vital religion generally, throughout the churches. There are several, and far famed, unions among churches, that were formerly at variance. If these are the effect of true religion's increasing, they are effected by the Holy Spirit's work on the heart; and if they are so, a greater regard to divine truth, and especially present truth, will appear foremost among them. There will be less of outward show, more of self-abasement, and inward converse with the heart. The widow, and the fatherless, will be visited in a more spiritual frame, and to better purpose.—Christians will observe a greater distance from the world, and manifest a greater abhorrence of its fashions, and a greater love to one another. They will talk less, and do more. There will be more of secret prayer. Ministers will be more practical, and searching, in their sermons; and the people will go away more delighted, and pleased, with Christ Jesus, than with the oratory of the speaker; and more dissatisfied with themselves. There will be a greater care over the purity of instituted worship, to take heed to do that which God has commanded. But is all this the case? Have not these unions been bought at the expense of present truth? Are they not confessedly agreements to differ? Are they not, in many instances, a specious show of harmony and heart-love, to cover burning jealousy? Is not the increase of numbers, and a respectable appearance, before the other churches, and the world, an avowed object in effecting them? Have not the motives, of very many, for entering into them, been of a mercenary kind?—Their manifest tendency has hitherto been, to make professors *less scrupulous* about all religious concerns together. To widden the door of admission,—to relax the exercise of discipline, and to go half way to meet the world, in many of its fashions. With good words and fair speeches, designing men have deceived the hearts of the simple into a passive assent to the project. But by and by, the cloven foot appears. It is neither Christ, nor his truth, but vile self that they were seeking. Were it true that undefiled religion produced these unions—"Instead of the thorn, would come up the fir tree, and the myrtle instead of the briar."

an over breaking up their fallow ground, for fear of marring and disturbing the surface. Consequently, they sow among thorns; and they themselves witness that the preaching has almost no effect! They cry, peace! peace! and the city, on the credit of this, has composed itself into a profound sleep! And they seek not to disturb it; yet complain that their labours are fruitless! They probe not the sore to the bottom, because the sensitive delicate charity of the times might faint at the sight; but heal it slightly, yet they are ever ready to cry out against the people—"There is no appetite for food—no digestion!" The hidden manna is light food, and the living water flows by untasted!

Of these things there is not wanting abundance of proof, which will come in better afterwards. Charity is the boast of the day. It abounds to overflowing every where. Now, if this is really the case, vital religion must have increased: for charity, as described in the Word, is the root, trunk, and branches, the sum total of the spiritual life; the other graces cannot exist a moment without it. But it "rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth." Dare this be said of the charity that holds so conspicuous a place at the present time? Does it not require that all points in dispute, shall be laid aside? Does it not set up a distinction among truths, into *essentials* and *non-essentials*? Does it not require, that you must not be so sure of any truth, in your profession, as to call its opposite *erroneous* and false? Does it not bring together a motley group at the Lord's table, to say constructively over his broken body and shed blood, in the most solemn manner—"We are one body, have one heart, one mind, and one way,"—while their public creed explicitly declares the contrary? Does it not rejoice in a multitude of names, annexed to a party, rather than *in the truth*? Does it not wink at the contempt which is cast upon the Testimony of Jesus and the word of God? These things cannot, in truth, be denied. It is, therefore, only a vile harlot in virgin's attire; and its wide spreading influence, instead of proving that religion is on the increase, proves the contrary.

Revivals are almost as numerous as the stars of heaven.—Not scarcely a religious newspaper or periodical, which brings not weekly, and monthly, fresh intelligence "of the downpouring of the spirit," as they term it, "and some forty or fifty haying been added to the church." And if they were revivals, in a scripture style, we should be compelled to acknowledge, that our times have evident signs of increasing godliness.—There would not be a corner in this extensive country which would not manifest the life and power of religion. But that this is very far from being the case, the devoted advocates of

revivals do themselves confess. The need for them is as great as ever.

A true revival comes not like a strong and great wind, rending the mountains and breaking the rocks in pieces; or, like an earthquake, or a fire; but like the still small voice of the gospel, which instrumentally gives it birth. If they were genuine, it were impossible that opposite doctrines, as is the case, could be equally instrumental in producing them; nor would their influence be of so short continuance. The communities which are most acquainted with them, talk like the consumptive patient, with great earnestness and anxiety of *being better* to-day, but the next time you see them, they are worse than ever. All their zeal and fervour are gone; a death-like apathy and coldness hath seized the members. Secret prayer, the respiration of the soul, is now so hard, so hurried, and so difficult, that a soul in health would think every prayer would be the last. Alas! reader, they are but "clouds without rain."

Finally: If vital religion were on the increase, it would manifest itself in an increased regard to the holy Sabbath, and to public ordinances. Christians would study to have a spiritual frame on that day; they would watch against the common affairs of life, against carnal company and conversation, and even against carnal thoughts, that would interfere with the spiritual work of that sacred day. They would be earnest to see God's face in the sanctuary, and to have others see it.—When returned home, they would give themselves to holy conversation and devout meditation, reading and prayer—nor would they be content to have a spiritual frame on that day only, but they would strive to have the frame of one Sabbath continue to another. But, reader, is this the general case? Is it not quite the reverse? Is it possible to walk through the length and breadth of the land, without meeting with the most appalling proofs that the true spirit of the Sabbath is about taking its leave? This one thing, would be sufficient to determine that vital religion is exceedingly low. And that if God, in remarkable mercy, prevent not, the thick darkness of Atheism will soon fall upon many a fair portion of the Christian world, where once the Sun of righteousness brightly shone.

But there are some good signs of our times, which it becomes the duty of the Christian carefully to study, that he may record the loving kindness of the Lord, and also know what Israel ought to do. In this part of the subject, I wish to be understood as speaking of events in their relation to Divine Providence only; reserving the part which men act, for subsequent consideration. And it will be useful to the reader

to remember this distinction; because, the same event viewed simply, in this relation, may be considered as a sign for good, which in relation to the motives and conduct of men, will have a very different aspect. In speaking of the times, it will be necessary to take into view the past as well as the present, so far, at least, as to enable us to discover which way the current is going.

If we look back fifty or sixty years, we will find that a *revolutionary spirit* has been one of their characteristics. It has gone over a great part of the civilized world, and it still continues its march, and seems to gather strength as it proceeds. The Revolution of the United States was the first within that period, and seems to have been a signal to the rest of the world. That of France was next. Then St. Domingo cast off slavery and the French yoke. The whole of South America has been revolutionized. Greece has, just now, become independent of Turkish oppression. Attempts have been made in Naples, Spain, Portugal, and Ireland. In a great many other places the same spirit has manifested itself, though in a less hostile manner; and has effected alterations and meliorations in the policy and commerce of the nations, without bloodshed. And in a great many others, in which its voice has not been publicly heard, as yet, the powers that be, seem to be aware of its existence. Abstracted from the concern which men have in it, I call this spirit a good sign of our times; because it has done, and is still doing, much that will subserve the cause of Jesus Christ in the world. The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and the utmost ends of the earth shall be his possession. And the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters do the channels of the sea.

Before these and similar predictions can be accomplished, the policy which holds the minds and consciences of men in bondage and darkness, or that hinders the free admission of the gospel into the nations, or restrains the subject from his christian liberty, must either be changed or overturned. Till this much be effected, there will be "*overturnings*," "*overturnings*," and when these *overturnings* take place, we may warrantably conclude that it is a sign of *His* coming whose right it is, and that in the appointed time it shall be given *Him*. These, in the first instance, may promise little advantage, or rather, immeasurable damage to the kingdom of Christ. For men generally run from one extreme to another. It is, therefore, natural to suppose that the vassal who succeeds in throwing off the yoke of the despot, will become licentious and impatient of all rule: And that the superstitious devotee, upon finding himself free from the authority of great

names, will quickly become a skeptic. Perhaps there never was a more striking instance of this transition of mind, than that which was apparent in the French revolution. Something of the same nature has followed this spirit of revolution wherever it has made much progress; and from these mad extremes, Christ and his church have as little to expect as from the tyrant or the Roman Pontiff. But the Lord who hath in his providence made these overturnings, is more of might than the noise of many waters or great sea billows, and his wisdom will eventually prevail, and then it will be seen that they were a step towards making men the free citizens of the kingdom of God. This happy result is hardly to be expected, in its fulness, very soon. It seems most probable that the tide of revolutionary spirit has yet to come to its height; then, perhaps, rising above all its present barriers, it may sweep along the face of the political world like a flood, before its force be spent, carrying away, not only those cruel tyrants of policy and superstition, which have so long cursed the earth, but it may be, also, the attainments of the Reformation Church. But still there are a train of effects and consequences following these overturnings, which in no very remote manner, appear even now to subserve the kingdom of Christ. First, an increase of *civil liberty*, has evidently resulted from them. In sundry countries, men begin to understand it, and thirst for it, and its actual enjoyment is already extended to many millions. Tyranny and despotism are giving way. In their old form, at least, they have ceased to exist on the American continent, and in Greece, and in sundry other countries they are much weakened. The political influence of the Pope and his conclave of cardinals, on the cabinets of Europe, is annihilated, or nearly so. The thunders of the Vatican which were wont to make the mightiest monarch tremble on his throne, are scarcely heard, and utterly disregarded. Men freely associate to discuss and determine the principles and maxims that ought to regulate their conduct in all respects. The voice of public opinion is heard, and the weight of it acknowledged, even where the government is monarchical; and the press, which is the mouth of the public, has, in several countries, obtained a greater liberty of speech; in others, it is altogether free. But perhaps nothing indicates more strongly the pervading influence of the spirit of liberty, at present, than the efforts made and still making to *abolish slavery*. This subject has been discussed fully. The public mind has been deeply impressed with its political and moral evil. Treaties have been made in which its abolition is a stipulation. The traffic of it has been interdicted under the penalty of death. In many places the slaves are now free. Colonies of free

blacks are already planted on their native soil, and great and generous efforts are made, not only to set them free, but to qualify them also to appreciate and enjoy their freedom.

By means of this spirit of liberty, does the cause of Christ indirectly obtain great advantage; for though many of the principles by which it is moving onward, be as hostile as the despotism and superstition that preceded; yet now *divine truth* unattended by civil authority is admitted to the common privilege of speaking for *herself*, and to enter the arena of public discussion, and meet her antagonist in fair combat.— And though sly infidelity may at first hold her “hope against hope,” in derision—though aspiring ambition and devouring avarice, may, in turn, treat her with neglect—yet will she prevail and triumph over all opposition.

A second consequence of these overturnings, which indirectly favours the kingdom of Christ, is a reduction of public burden and increase of pecuniary strength. To some countries, this may not apply in any remarkable degree, as yet; but to others it will. It is not the proper effect of revolution itself, which commonly demands heavy contributions, while in its progress it destroys property and sheds blood. Nor is it always even a consequence of it, for it may lodge the supreme power in the hands of despotism, as well as establish freedom on its own just foundation, but where this last is its achievement, the consequence mentioned will soon be perceptible. And that it *has* been its consequence in this country, and to some extent in others, cannot be reasonably denied.— In former times, the wealth of the world was drained to sustain the Roman Pontiff and his creatures, in boundless luxury and unspeakable debaucheries, and what they left was swallowed up by pompous and ambitious tyrants. The profits of the trader and the earnings of the labourer, they durst not call their own: but now there is a great change; the operative classes of men, not only enjoy the fruit of their own industry, but they have risen to a condition in which they can contribute largely to the support of any institution which meets their approbation, and consequently to the institutions of the gospel. The sums now annually raised, in Europe and America to support free institutions of a religious nature, are sufficient to prove that the pure ordinances and doctrines of the gospel CAN be supported throughout a vast extent of the world, enormous religious establishments and taxations notwithstanding, whensoever it shall please the Holy Spirit of God to turn the hearts of men towards that subject.

(To be continued.)

REMARKS ON QUERY 1, IN NOV. NUMBER.

"How is the opposition made to sin, by the natural conscience, to be distinguished from that made by a principle of grace?"

To what extent sin may be opposed by the mere force of conscience, especially when assisted by the knowledge of the will of God, revealed in the holy scriptures, which may be attained by the unregenerate, it may be difficult to determine. But that the mere legalist, the hypocrite, or nominal Christian, may abstain from every thing inconsistent with a fair profession, of religion, or outward conformity to the divine law, is abundantly clear from the sacred oracles. The proud pharisee is not charged with exceeding the bounds of truth, when he vauntingly said—"God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers," &c. Paul, referring to his unrenewed state, declares, that "touching the righteousness of the law, he was blameless," till it pleased God to call him by his grace. And that sect to which he belonged, "outwardly appeared righteous unto men." But while, to maintain such a character, it necessarily required a careful study to avoid vicious indulgences, or scandalous transgressions of the rule of duty; it is certain that such strictness was not influenced by gracious principles; not the true fear of God, or love of his law, had influence here; but some worldly, selfish, consideration, as a regard to character and interest. For amidst all their professions of religion, and pretensions to piety, "within they were full of iniquity and hypocrisy."

This, then, may justly be considered as constituting an essential difference between the opposition made to sin by natural conscience, and that made by a principle of grace; that the first is partial; all sin is not the object of it. There may be a care to abstain from external sinful acts, even a strenuous endeavour to curb and repress the workings of particular lusts, but not an aiming at the mortification of the whole body of sin. On the contrary, "they that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts," of every evil principle, every sinful habit or propensity, nothing less than the entire destruction is aimed at. An exterminating war is carried on. The whole body of sin is under sentence of death. And however the true Christian may have occasion to mourn over the remains of sin, and to loathe himself for his iniquities, and his abominations, an invincible principle of antipathy to all sin, is inherent in his new nature. If in his unconverted state, "sin reigned in his mortal body, and he yielded his members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin;" now,

"he yields himself unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and his members as instruments of righteousness unto God." And as he opposes sin, as such, this necessarily leads him to oppose all sin; sin in thought, as well as in word, and action. Here, the natural man, in his opposition to sin, is altogether deficient. Sin, in its real nature, as contrary to the holy nature and law of God, is not the object of his opposition. The guilt of sin is what alarms him, or what he apprehends of the demerit of sin, as exposing him to the curse of the law. Could he indulge his lusts, or practise sin with impunity, the consideration of its evil nature, and the dishonour thereby done to God, would have no power to restrain him. Rather, he is blind to such views of sin, and of course not affected with them. How different the true penitent! While he cannot but acknowledge that because of sin, he deserves the wrath and curse of God, and that without an interest in the all-atoning blood of the Redeemer, he must have perished forever; he is no less penetrated with a sense of the abominable, odious nature of sin, than with its guilt; no less earnest for sanctifying grace than for pardoning mercy. The language of the penitent monarch is expressive of his feelings—"against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and in thy sight done evil."

And if we turn our attention to the species, or kinds of sin, to which opposition is made by the natural conscience, we need not hesitate to assert, that it by no means extends to such as, in the light of revelation, are of the most damning nature, the most offensive to the only Holy One, and of the most ruinous consequence, especially the sin of unbelief. To convince of this, our Lord declares, is the work of the spirit. "Of sin, because they believe not on me." "I will pour upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn." Indeed, for an answer to the question under consideration, we might refer to what is commonly observed in the character or ingredients of legal or natural repentance, as distinguished from what is spiritual and evangelical.* A constant respect to Christ as exalted a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission

* Spiritual sins, says Charnock, may revel, where the more fleshly and sensual iniquities are excluded. There is a war in the heart of the new creature, against spiritual wickedness. Eph. vi. 12. Spiritual wickedness in high places, or, *wickedness spiritualized in high places*, i. e. the choicest faculties of the soul. Satan doth most excite those sins in the heart, and natural conscience makes no resistance against them. A natural man may quarrel with some sins, not with all; renewed men with all, because all are enemies to God, and to the life of grace in the heart. The renewed man is always with arms in his hands to extirpate sin, and drive the Canaanite from his forts, as well as from the open field.

of sins ; and a dependance on the Spirit for grace and strength, to prosecute our conflict with sin, and to render us victorious over that worst enemy of the soul, may be regarded as a true criterion of the spiritual warfare, the fight of faith.

We may add, that a holy jealousy lest we be found inclined to spare any sinful lust, any evil habit, any beloved idol ; saying in our hearts of this or the other sin, " Is it not a little one ? " is no small evidence of the power of divine grace in the soul, or that the state of matters is such as the apostle describes, (Gal. v. 17) " The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and they are contrary one to the other."

The importance of Query 2d. entitles it to more attention than can at present be given to it. F.

Selections.

EXTRACT FROM A REVIEW OF ADAM CLARKE'S DISCOURSES,
PUBLISHED IN THE CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

Discourses on various subjects relative to the Being and Attributes of God, and his Works in Creation, Providence, and Grace ; by ADAM CLARKE. LL. D., F. A. S. etc. etc. New-York. 1829. 8vo. pp. 304.

The writings of Dr. Adam Clarke are a strange compound—we will not say of sense and nonsense—but of *common* sense and that which is singularly *uncommon*. From his Commentary on the scriptures, which opens with some ten or twenty reasons to prove that the serpent who tempted Eve was a *ba-boon*, down to the volume of sermons now before us, they abound in learned lore, ingenious conjectures, gross inconsistencies, very doubtful metaphysics, and much excellent feeling, which are poured out upon the reader with but little regard to order or selection. If Dr. Clarke does not act on the fixed principle of exhibiting the whole amount of his knowledge on every subject as it comes before him, he at least deals it forth with a lavish hand ; leaving it, however, very often to the reader, to discover at his leisure the precise relevancy of his facts and quotations. Though frequently *pungent* in his public discourses, yet, where his subject or the occasion would prompt him to be *eloquent*, we commonly find him either coldly learned, or dryly casuistical. Of this his Charity sermons are a striking illustration.

This profusion of learning, science, and metaphysics, appears a little singular in one who stands at the head of a sect so distinguished for servid declamation against human learning and " *man-made ministers*." Precisely what proportion of

his brethren in this country, whether bishops, priests, or laity, will be able to follow him in his quotations from the Saxon, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Samaritan, Arabic, and Ethiopic languages, with which he has variegated his pages, we cannot say. We regret, however, that some one could not be found to correct so obvious a slip of the pen, as occurs in a translation of a short Hebrew phrase, on page 254, where Dr. Clarke twice writes *day* for *night*; as well as to present his Hebrew quotations to the American public, without the blunder of making them read, as on page 253—5, from the lower line to the one above. But, to waive this subject, it is no anomaly at all in human nature, to find our Methodist friends indulging rather unduly in their exultation over this wonderful display of learning in their champion. Perhaps the very vehemence with which they have decried "human knowledge," only prepared them to hail, with greater rapture, so powerful an auxiliary and even to overrate his prowess, when they saw him coming to their aid, loaded with the spoils of so many unknown languages and nations. Had Dr. Scott crowded his works, in this way, with learned and abstruse matter, what would have been the result? Could they ever have become generally popular, till the abstruse and the illegible matter was swept from his pages? Would his Bible, especially, ever have become a "*family Bible*?" And yet we have now before us an edition of A. Clarke's Commentary on the New Testament, on coarse paper and in cheap binding, to accommodate it to the means of all; and even in this edition, the stiff and stately Hebrew, the nimble Greek, the sprawling Arabic, and almost all other conceivable characters, are found parading the pages in dumb show. Had these costly accompaniments been omitted, the paper and execution might have been much better at the same price, and the work equally useful to those for whom it was chiefly designed.

After all, we do not object to this in the least. We only wonder at it,—and wondering, rejoice to see it. For, however unprofitable in itself, the indirect and ultimate bearing of that work will be propitious. Widely circulated as it is, it will tend powerfully to change for the better one broad feature in the character of those, who will be the principal admirers of Adam Clarke. They will cease to decry learning; and, we hope, will become its zealous promoters, and do much to raise the standard of knowledge among the more uninformed in this country and in Great Britain. Such a change is now rapidly taking place. Their seminaries are rising in different parts of our land with considerable promise; and we doubt not there are already many of their number, who are ashamed of what has heretofore been said by both preachers and lay-

men on this subject. This increase of light, will do much to dispel doctrinal error, and cure fanaticism.*

Should the change in this respect become complete in all our existing denominations, it would not be surprising, if a new sect should arise to promote ignorance as its distinctive object; and thus allure to its standard, the miserable remnant of those who should still believe that a preacher is the more likely to be aided with a direct inspiration from heaven, just in proportion as he is incapacitated to read or understand the revelation which God has given in his word. Lest any one should think this conjecture extravagant, we beg leave to add, that we once knew of a preacher in a distant part of our country, who openly boasted in a public assembly, as he requested a woman to find and read his text, that he had never been able to read himself, but had received his gift of preaching from a higher source. This man found not a few to admire and caress him. We ought in justice, however, to say, that he was not a Methodist.

The sermons before us will help forward the desirable revolution to which we have already alluded. They bear the same aspect as the author's other productions. Upon at any page, and you recognize the personal identity of Adam Clarke,—the same exhibition of diversified learning, old and new,—the same parade of science,—the same style of reasoning,—the same quaintness and tartness of expression,—the same mingling of things high and low, dignified and vulgar. We are sorry to be compelled to add, that occasionally his vulgarity of expression on sacred themes, too nearly resembles the coarse language of the profane. To illustrate this remark, as well as the one just made respecting his incongruous mingling of things high and low, we extract the following short, but entire note, from his commentary on Acts xii.

How true is the saying, there is neither counsel nor might against the Lord. In the midst of all troubles and afflictions, that kingdom of heaven which is like a grain of mustard seed, grew and increased, and became a mighty tree which is now filling the whole earth; and fowls of every wing are flying to lodge in its branches. *Ride on, and be thou prosperous, O Christ! we wish thee god LUCK with thine honour.*

It will not be thought strange, that the man who can thus speak of *luck* with reference to an omniscient and omnipotent Being, should also deny the decrees and the perfect foreknowledge of God.

* We would recommend that Dr. C's. sermon on "*christian moderation*," the last in this volume, be publicly read at the opening of every camp-meeting,—and perhaps read again, if found necessary, some time during the last night. Though not expressly designed for such an occasion, it would doubtless be found very useful.

Still, with all his faults, the writings of this original and indefatigable author seldom fail to interest. Sometimes he is quite amusing in manner or matter. He deals in thought of some kind; and is quite instructive to the mind, and often searching to the conscience. His air is rather antique, and one is tempted to think him born out of his age by a few centuries, and that he properly belongs to a period some generations nearer to that of Thomas Aquinas, whom he admires as "an *eminent divine*." He aims at great *acumen*, and is fond of discussing curious questions in a curious way. But, while he is often perspicuous and forcible, he is occasionally very obscure; and sometimes falls into the most palpable contradictions on the same page. He does not stoop to modify his assertions or his reasonings; but drives right on with a very comfortable self-reliance, and where it is not convenient to give *reasons*, he substitutes *dogmas*,—sometimes very forcibly expressed and very true, and sometimes very false and absurd.

The sermons before us, fifteen in number, are on miscellaneous subjects, some are very long, others are quite short; and are thickly studied with figures denoting numerical divisions. The third, which is by no means the longest, contains, if we mistake not, *ninety-six* formal divisions. It is quite possible that others have still more, but having counted the number in only two of the discourses, we cannot vouch for the fact.

In an advertisement prefixed to the work, Dr. Clarke gives some brief notices of himself which may gratify the curious, as they show, among other things, the estimation in which his friends in England hold him as a preacher.

During my long ministerial life, I have written but very few sermons, most of which have been already published; and, for want of time and health, they have been permitted to get out of print. I wished to have republished those, and to have added a few more, which I had prepared for the press; but the editors having got most of my MSS., without properly consulting me, announced a volume of *original* sermons, for which I was not prepared. Many were brought to me which were said to have been "taken down by shorthand writers;" but, when I came to peruse them, I found I could make no kind of use of them. They were neither in *language* nor in *matter* any thing to which I could creditably or with a good conscience set my hand. I afterwards understood that my enunciation, though distinct, was too *rapid* to be caught by those artists, in consequence of which many *half sentences* appeared, and the *reasoning* was marred, unconnected, unfinished, and indeed, sometimes contradictory to itself. This was the case particularly with several which had been taken down, some years ago, at the instance of *some gentlemen*, who, believing that I was near death, (for I was then in a bad state of health,) thought they could oblige the public and *themselves*, by having my last discourses ready by the time I might be interred! Their good intentions have been hitherto frustrated, and I think it is well for all concerned, and who might have been concerned, that such *odds and ends* never appeared, and this imperfect taking down was nearly the same in all: for let the artists be whom [who] they might, I found, on examining the fruits of their la-

hours, that they had, to a man, given me a *strange language*, worse by many degrees than my own; that they had often *perverted* my sense, misrepresented my criticisms, and confounded my reasoning. pp. 3, 4.

It is not our object to remark on this passage, but we may be permitted to say, that we fully believe 'his reasoning appeared marred, unconnected, unfinished, and sometimes *contradictory to itself*.' But how much of all this is to be charged to his stenographer, is not so clear a point. If a man can deliberately *write* contradictions, it is very possible he may have uttered them in his *extempore* effusions. Before closing this article, we shall give a few specimens, which may serve, at least, to palliate the errors, complained of in the stenographers.

We give another paragraph from the advertisement, for the purpose of making a few remarks on the topics which it contains.

As I believe that *just notions* of God are the foundation of true religion and of all rational worship, I have endeavoured to introduce such in the Discourses on the *Being and Attributes of God*. Some think it is always best to leave such difficult and sublime subjects untouched. I am not of this mind; and I am sorry that this notion has prevailed so much: through it many are weak, and all easily stumbled, that have got under its influence. What can we rationally believe, and how can we worship, if we have not tolerably correct notions of Him in whom we live and move, and from whom we have our being? If spared, I may resume even this subject, and endeavour to calculate with greater accuracy several matters, that might be considered in exact detail. pp. 4, 5.

We hope indeed he will be spared to "*calculate*" these matters with far "*greater accuracy*," than we have yet seen from his pen.

We agree with him perfectly in considering these *deep* matters the very foundation. A proper knowledge of the attributes of God in connection with a like knowledge of the attributes of man, comprises almost all the knowledge of true religion which we need, or can possibly gain in this world. And we are as sorry as he can be, that any one should think a preacher ought to leave untouched the profound or the sublime parts of what God has seen fit to reveal. Where such a prejudice predominates, it is proof enough that the people are weak, misguided, or thoroughly depraved. We fear our own age is not a little in fault in this matter; though we hope, just at the present moment, that we are not, (in this part of our country at least,) relapsing any deeper into this error.—The alarm begins in a measure to be felt, lest the reading of ephemeral matter should be *all* our reading; and the preaching which the people will desire, and ministers will be induced to give, should become little else than that which is fitted to gratify a superficial habit of thought, or regale an ap-

petite for mere excitement. We hope the tide in this respect is beginning to turn, and that there will be a call for profounder research, and a readiness in preachers and writers to meet the call. The question with the catholics, which seems about to be revived, will incidentally aid the progress of thought and research. The rising of "the man of sin" among us, we hope will be the occasion of deeper knowledge and greater holiness, in those who may be called to guard against his seducing wiles.

But while we should preach, and hear, and study with patience and delight, the *revealed* attributes of God and of man, let us beware of that excessive passion for theory, which leads its devotee to supply from imagination the real or supposed chasms which God has left in his word. Let the inquisitive lover of truth penetrate to the depths, or soar to the sublime heights where revelation would lead him, but there let him stop. At a period like this, when a taste for investigation appears to be awakening with new vigor, there is peculiar need both of the encouragement and the caution, contained in that memorable declaration of the aged Moses to the generation of Israel, who had grown up under his instruction. "*The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.*" On this passage Dr. Scott has the following remark. "Almost all the heresies and controversies, which have corrupted the purity, or disturbed the peace of the church in every age, have originated from disregard to this distinction; from vain attempts, by human reasonings and authority, to fill up supposed chasms in revelation, and to make it more apparently consistent and systematical than it hath pleased God to make it; from deducing disputable consequences from revelation, or tracing back its sacred mysteries to some *unrevealed* antecedent causes." Admirable reflection, on a most admirable theme!—Would to God, that both text and comment were inscribed on brass, and placed in the study and right before the eye of every one, who is to preach, or write, or speak, or think on the great doctrines of godliness. With this in view, let each one of us, young and old, review most prayerfully his present creed, and compare it with the word of God; ready to remove, with a cautious but unsparing hand, all those portions which shall appear manifestly of mere human fabrication.—And having done this, let us proceed with the like circumspect regard to revelation, to enlarge and fill up the measure of our faith, that we may no longer be incumbered, or be the means of incumbering others, with that which at the best is but "wood, hay, and stubble." Absolutely here, if any where in

the whole range of intellect, man needs to know and to keep steadily in view, the proper boundaries to the province of human reason; yet no where have they been so frequently or so violently trampled down. Is there not some one of all the gifted sons of the church, to rise up in the hour of need, and mark more clearly to our vision these sacred confines? An effective work "on the province of human reason," would be as great an encouragement to thorough investigation, as it would a barrier to vain and hurtful speculation. And designedly such is the rapid and comet-like outline, given in the brief declaration from the lips of Moses, on "secret and revealed things." It is designed at once as a *stimulus* and *guide* to the candid inquirer, and a *frowning barrier* to the audacious theorist.

Had Dr. C. among others, been suitably mindful of the revealed caution on this subject, we surely should never have had such speculations from his pen as some of those which it now becomes our duty to notice.

There are attributes which now belong to God, that are not essential to his nature. He is *merciful*; but before the fall of man this could not have been one of his attributes; in like manner, he is *long-suffering*; he is the *Forgiver* of iniquity, transgression, and sin; and in a word, he is *GOD our SAVIOUR*. But though all these spring from his infinite *goodness*, which ever was, and must be, an essential attribute of his nature, yet it was only in consequence of *sin* entering into the world, that his innate essential goodness became necessary to be expressed by these *manifestations*, and their concomitant acts. p. 75.

For ought we can conceive, Dr. Clarke might go on to say just the same of every divine attribute which finds its appropriate object in creation. If God could not be merciful or long-suffering till there was a sinful object towards which to exercise these attributes, how could he ever have been good, till there was some other being than himself to be the object of his goodness? How could he have been wise, or powerful, until the very period of calling these attributes into exercise? How could he have been any thing at all, except the supreme God of the Bramins,—a being not only destitute of passions, but of all qualities? But the absurdity of Dr. C.'s position, whether it goes necessarily to this full extent or not, requires to be met only by his own direct contradiction, which we find under the same head, and within the compass of a single page.

There is *one* God.—There is one self-existing, infinite, eternal Being: possessed of all possible perfections, and of each in an infinite manner. An *eternity* of perfections; and each perfection absolutely so. He is so perfect that no perfection is wanting: and so absolutely perfect that no perfection can be added. This God is the Good Being; the Fountain of goodness—the Source of blessedness. p. 74.

'An eternity of all possible perfections,' must surely have included the perfection of *mercy*, just as truly as any other perfection, which finds its appropriate object in the precincts of time and creation.

We strongly object to such views of God, as countenance at all the position, that any of his attributes first spring into existence, when the period arrives for their visible manifestation. Such views are extremely derogatory to the divine character. They are entirely at war with the doctrine of his immutability; and leave us no assurance that he will continue forever to be the same just, merciful, or holy being, which he now is. They find not the least countenance in the word of God. They find no place in any system, but one which denies the foreknowledge and the strict immutability of Jehovah. The constituent parts of such a system, we deem it a sacred duty to expose, wherever we meet them.

[From the Spirit of the Pilgrims.]

THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

In 1791, was published in London, "An Enquiry into the Constitution Discipline, Unity and Worship of the Primitive Church, that flourished within the first three hundred years after Christ. By an Impartial Hand." This "impartial hand" is known to have been the hand of Sir Peter King, afterwards Lord Chancellor of England. His work (a truly learned and valuable one, of which we should be glad to see a new edition) is often quoted by Unitarians to prove that, in the primitive age, there was no distinction between church and parish—the whole assembly were considered as the church—and all were entitled to vote together in the choice of their religious teachers. We have recently examined the work of Chancellor King with this object specially in view, and shall now present to our readers the result of our inquiries.

Our author describes "a particular church" of the primitive age, as "a company of *believers*, who, at one time, in one and the same place, did *associate themselves together*,"* and concur in the participation of *all the institutions and ordinances* of Jesus Christ, with their proper pastors and ministers." p. 3.—The members of the primitive churches, as will be seen from this definition, were all of them *communicants*. We celebrate the sacrament," says Cyprian, "the *whole brotherhood being present*."

The terms of admission to the communion of the ancient churches are thus described by Chancellor King :

"Those persons who designed to leave heathenism and idolatry, and desired to be members of a Christian church, were

* Pliny says the Christians in his time "*voluntarily bound themselves by a solemn oath, to abstain from vice, and to relinquish every sinful pursuit*."—Epis. Traj. Imp. Lib. x. Epis. 97.

Tertullian describes the Christian church as united "by an *agreement in discipline and a covenant of hope*." Apol. ad. Gen. cap. xxxix.

not presently advanced to that degree, but were first continued a certain space of time in the rank of Catechumens, or the catechised ones. These were candidates of Christianity, who were to stay sometime in that order for these two reasons: The one was, that they might be catechised and instructed in the articles of the Christian faith; and the other was, that they might give demonstrations of the reality of their intentions, *by the change of their lives, and the holiness of their conversation.* "When they had changed their manners, and rectified their irregular carriages, then they were washed with the water of baptism, and not before; for as Tertullian saith, 'We are not baptized that we may cease to sin, but because we have already ceased.' " pp. 100—103. "The person to be baptized was first asked several *questions*, by him that officiated; unto which he was to give his answers."* "Now these questions and answers were two-fold: First, of abjuration of the devil and all his works; and secondly, of a *firm assent to the articles of the Christian faith.*" "Cyprian writes that, at baptism, they asked the baptized person's assent to this creed, 'Whether he believed in *God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, remission of sins, and eternal life through the church?*' " "For in the days of the Apostles, as well as afterwards, it was the practice at baptism, to demand the baptized person's assent to the fundamental articles of the Christian faith; among which fundamentals, we may be *certain* they reckoned the DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY, and that of the *unity of the Godhead*, and that of the *resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.*"

"The water being consecrated, the person was then baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. So, writes Justin Martyr, 'They are baptized in the name of God the Father, Lord of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost.' This baptizing in the name of the Trinity, Origen terms, 'The invocation of the adorable Trinity.' " pp. 24—72. part ii. "As soon as they were baptized, they commenced members of the church universal, and of that particular church wherein they were so baptized, and became actual sharers and exerters of all the privileges and powers of the faithful." p. 103.

After this account of the manner and terms of admission to the primitive churches, given in the very language of Chancellor King, our readers will know how to estimate the appeals which are often made to him, as affording countenance to the views of Unitarians respecting the church. He does in-

* Here was a formal *examination* previous to admission. Justin Martyr, in his second apology, says, "They *examine* such as are admitted to their communion, whether they be able in all things to conform themselves to the word and will of God."

deed say that, in ancient times, "a parish and a particular church were synonymous terms;" but he takes special pains to show that, in saying this, he does not use the word church as synonymous with *parish in the modern sense*, but the word parish as synonymous with *church, in the defined, exclusive sense*, as comprehending *none except the communicants*. For he mentions the case of a certain heretic whom the parish to which he belonged would not receive; that is," says King, "the particular *church* to which he appertained excluded him from communion." p. 17.

The work before us, so far from proving that the whole assembly, in primitive times, were considered the church, and entitled to privileges as such, proves directly the contrary.

"As for the persons *communicating*, they were not, indifferently, *all* that professed the Christian faith, as Origen writes, 'It doth not belong to every one to eat of this bread, and to drink of this cup;' but they were only such as were in the number of the faithful, such as were baptized, and received both the *credentials* and *practicals* of Christianity. Such as these, and none else, were permitted to communicate."—"Hence, when the other parts of divine worship were ended, and the celebration of the Eucharist was to begin, the catechumens, penitents,* and *all*, except the communicants, *were to depart*, as Tertullian says hereof, 'Pious initiations drive away the profane;' these being mysteries which were to be kept secret and concealed from all except the faithful."—"The catechumens, with others, being *gone out* and *none remaining but the faithful*, the celebration of the Eucharist next followed." pp. 104—100, part ii.

[From the Spirit of the Pilgrims.]

VIEWS OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS RELATIVE TO THE ATONEMENT.

The following is from an Epistle of Justin Martyr to Diognetus, contained in the works of Justin, Ed. Paris, 1636, p. 500.

"When the measure of our iniquities was filled up, and it was perfectly manifest that now the retribution, even *punishment and death*, was alone to be expected; the time came which God had predetermined, for the manifestation of the goodness and power so surpassingly his own; so that his *sole love* from a kindness to man exceeding all thought, [has wrought this work of grace.] He has not branded you with his hatred, nor cast you off, nor remembered your wickedness; but, in his long suffering and forbearance he has said, '*He bore our sins.*' *Himself hath given his own Son, a ransom price for us; the Holy One for the transgressors, the Innocent for*

* Those who had been suspended from communion, and though seemingly penitent, were not yet restored.

*the wicked, the Righteous for the unrighteous, the Immortal for the mortal. For what, but his righteousness, could cover our sins? In whom was it possible that we, transgressors and ungodly, could be justified, but in the Son of God alone? O delightful SUBSTITUTION! * O unsearchable work! O beneficence beyond all expectation! That the iniquity of the many should be lost in the Righteous One; and the righteousness of the One should justify the many transgressors! Thus then, in the time past, God hath demonstrated the impossibility that our nature should, [by its own powers] obtain life; and now he hath displayed the Saviour, who is able to save, contrary to all [human] possibility. In both hath he declared his will, that we should trust in his goodness; and account him our Nourisher, our Father, our Teacher, our Counsellor, our Healer, our Understanding, our Light, our Honour, our Glory, our Strength, our Life."*

INTERESTING CONVERSIONS.

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."—2 Cor. v. 17.

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN."—John, iii. 7.

Too much stress has been laid upon persons being able to declare the time and manner of their conversion: Though we frequently find accounts given by individuals of their conversion to God, which are highly satisfactory to the mind, and carry with them internal evidence that the writers of them had been subjects of the *new birth*. Of this character, are the following accounts given by President Edwards and Andrew Fuller. Having admitted this much, we do not hesitate to say, on the other hand, that these accounts, many of them, carry an internal evidence equally conclusive, that they are mere delusion, and are as far removed from the new birth, described in the scriptures, as heaven is from earth. And a reliance on these has been one of the most fruitful sources of the great declension of our times. Therefore it is, that keeping the commandments of God, ("If ye love me keep my commandments,") and bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, are made, by the scriptures, the only safe criterion by which to test Christian character: And it is not because the writers of the following accounts say that they experienced such and such things, but because they speak a language known only to the *new man*, a language the import of which the unregenerate man can form no conception, that gives us a holy satisfaction and joy in reading them.

PRESIDENT EDWARDS.

This distinguished divine was the subject of frequent solemn impressions, and was regular in the performance of religious duties, from his childhood.—

*It is not a little remarkable to find an extract, teaching the proper substitution of our Lord, pass without comment, in a work devoted to the Hopkinsonian views of the nature of the atonement.—ED. REL. MON.

Soon after leaving college, when about seventeen years of age, he experienced a change in his affections, which he describes in the following manner :

"From my childhood up, my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased; leaving them eternally to perish. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well, when I seemed to be convinced, and fully satisfied, as to the sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men, according to his sovereign pleasure.

"The first instance that I remember of that sort of inward, sweet delight in God and divine things that I have lived much in since, was on reading those words, '*Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory forever and ever, Amen.*' As I read the words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the Divine Being, a new sense, quite different from any thing I ever experienced before.—Never any words of Scripture seemed to me as these words did.

"From about that time, I began to have a new kind of apprehensions and ideas of Christ, and the work of redemption, and the glorious way of salvation by him. An inward, sweet sense of these things, at times, came into my heart; and my soul was led away in pleasant views, and contemplations of them. And my mind was greatly engaged to spend my time in reading and meditating on Christ, on the beauty and excellency of his person, and the lovely way of salvation by free grace in him. I found no books so delightful to me, as those that treated of these subjects. The sense I had of divine things would often, of a sudden, kindle up, as it were, a sweet burning in my heart; an ardour of soul, that I know not how to express.

"Not long after I first began to experience these things, I gave an account to my father of some things that had passed in my mind. I was pretty much affected by the discourse we had together; and when the discourse was ended, I walked abroad alone, in a solitary place in my father's pasture, for contemplation. And as I was walking there, and looking up on the sky and clouds, there came into my mind so sweet a sense of the glorious *majesty* and *grace* of God, that I know not how to express. I seemed to see them both in a sweet conjunction; majesty and meekness joined together; it was a sweet, and gentle, and holy majesty; and also a majestic meekness; an awful sweetness; a high, and great, and holy gentleness.

"After this my sense of divine things gradually increased, and became more and more lively, and had more of that inward sweetness. The appearance of every thing was altered;

there seemed to be, as it were, a calm, sweet east, or appearance of divine glory, in almost everything. God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity and love, seemed to appear in every thing; in the sun, moon, and stars; in the clouds, and blue sky; in the grass, flowers, trees; in the water, and all nature; which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon for continuance; and in the day spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things; in the mean time singing forth, with a low voice, my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer.

"I felt then great satisfaction as to my good state; but that did not content me. I had vehement longings of soul after God and Christ, and after more holiness, wherewith my heart seemed to be full, and ready to break; which often brought to my mind the words of the Psalmist, '*My soul breaketh for the longing it hath.*' I often felt a mourning and lamenting in my heart that I had not turned to God sooner, that I might have had more time to grow in grace. My mind was greatly fixed on divine things; almost perpetually in the contemplation of them. I spent most of my time in thinking of divine things, year after year; often walking alone in the woods and solitary places for meditation, soliloquy and prayer, and converse with God; and it was always my manner, at such times, to sing forth my contemplations. I was almost constantly in ejaculatory prayer, wherever I was. Prayer seemed to be natural to me, as the breath by which the inward burnings of my heart had vent."

ANDREW FULLER.

In his youth, this excellent man had frequent convictions of sin, and frequent struggles between his inclinations and his conscience, between the strivings of the Holy Spirit, and the suggestions of his evil heart. He often spent his evenings in vain and sinful company, to which he was strongly attached, and on leaving which he was uniformly in great distress.

"One morning," says he, "I think in November, 1769, I walked out by myself with an unusual load of guilt upon my conscience. The remembrance of my sin, not only on the past evening, but for a long time back, the breach of my vows, and the shocking termination of my former hopes and affections, all uniting together, formed a burden which I knew not how to bear. The reproaches of a guilty conscience seemed like the gnawing worm of hell. I do not write in the language of exaggeration. I now know that the sense which I then had of the evil of sin, and the wrath of God, was very far short of the truth; but yet it seemed more than I was able to sustain. In reflecting upon my broken vows, I saw that there was no truth in me. I saw that God would be perfectly just in send-

ing me to hell, and that to hell I must go, unless I were saved of mere grace, and as it were in spite of myself. I felt, that if God were to forgive me all my past sins, I should again destroy my soul, and that, in less than a day's time. I never before knew what it was to feel myself an odious lost sinner, standing in need of both pardon and purification. I knew not what to do! I durst not promise amendment; for I saw such promises were self-deception. To hope for forgiveness in the course that I was in, was the height of presumption; and to think of Christ, after having so basely abused his grace, seemed too much. So I had no refuge. As near as I can remember, I was like a man drowning, looking every way for help, or rather, catching for something by which he might save his life. I tried to find whether there were any hope in the divine mercy, any in the Saviour of sinners; but felt repulsed by the thought of mercy having been so basely abused already. In this state of mind, as I was moving slowly on, I thought of the resolution of Job, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' I paused, and repeated the words over and over. Each repetition seemed to kindle a ray of hope, mixed with a determination, *if I might*, to cast my perishing soul upon the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, to be both pardoned and purified; for I felt that I needed the one as much as the other. In this way I continued above an hour, weeping and supplicating mercy for the Saviour's sake: (my soul hath it still in remembrance, and is humbled in me!) and as the eye of the mind was more and more fixed upon him, my guilt and fears were gradually and insensibly removed. I now found rest for my troubled soul.

"When I thought of my past life, I abhorred myself, and repented as in dust and ashes; and when I thought of the gospel way of salvation, I drank it in as cold water is imbibed by a thirsty soul. My heart felt one with Christ, and dead to every other object around me.

"From this time, my former wicked courses were forsaken. I had no manner of desire after them. They lost their influence upon me. To those evils, a glance at which before would have set my passions in a flame, I now felt no inclination. 'My soul' (said I, with joy and triumph,) 'is a weaned child!' I now knew, experimentally, what it was to be dead to the world by the cross of Christ, and to feel an habitual determination to devote my future life to God my Saviour."

SERMONS on Doctrinal and Practical subjects; by the Rev. James Whyte, late of Salem, New-York. Philadelphia. Towar & Hogan. Duodecimo, pp. 379.

This work has just been received, and we had commenced preparing a notice of it, when the Magazine of the Reformed Dutch church came to hand, containing the following, which answers our purpose: And to save labour we shall give it instead of our own. It may be proper, however, to observe, that we have discovered some obvious errors in substituting wrong words, either in the transcribing or printing of these sermons; but it is believed that they may be generally corrected by the reader.

To the Editor of the Magazine of the R. D. Church:

Dear Sir—Some time ago I noticed with great satisfaction, in your valuable Magazine, a short account of the REV. JAMES WHYTE, late Pastor of the Associate Congregation of Salem, N. Y. He was, indeed, "a burning and a shining light." As a preacher of the everlasting gospel he had but a few equals. He uniformly addressed his audience with so much earnestness and unction, that his hearers seldom failed to catch some of his fervour. Even the thoughtless and unbelieving were moved by his zeal, and the most trifling and profligate were not able to resist the spirit by which he spake. This excellent man also lived as he preached. His exhortation was not of deceit nor in guile. All who knew him "are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblamably," he behaved himself among them that believed.

This eloquent preacher and faithful servant was called to rest from his labours, when he had been but a few years in the ministry. But he died in the Lord, enjoying a hope full of immortality; and largely experiencing the consolations of that gospel, which he had so faithfully preached. Though summoned early and suddenly away he left behind him many proofs of his industry. Some of these remains have been thought by his friends too precious to be suppressed. And one of my objects in writing this letter to you, is by this means to inform your readers, that a small volume of sermons selected from his manuscripts, has just been published. These sermons may be less perfect than they would have been, had they been corrected by the finishing hand of their highly gifted author, but with any imperfections they may have, I think they may be safely recommended to the public. I am persuaded there are but few sermons that will be read with more pleasure and profit. But my object is not so much to recommend them, for they will recommend themselves, as to beg of you the favour to insert the following extract taken from one of them, in your Magazine, and at the same time to express my hope that, if any of your readers should like the

matter and style, they may be induced to take the volume.— It may possibly be an additional inducement to your benevolent readers to know, that the profits of the publication are to be paid over to the destitute family of this distinguished preacher.

I am, &c.

A. S.

New-York, Dec. 1829.

The following extract is part of a sermon on these words, Luke 7, 13. "*Weep not.*" After a very suitable introduction the author proceeds: "In the first place, I request your attention to the occasion on which these words were uttered, and to the situation of the individuals, to whom they were addressed. 'The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound: to appoint to them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness!' Such was the prophetic character of the Messiah, and it is completely ascertained, and verified in the person and miracles of our Lord Jesus Christ. His whole life was a tour of charity. He went about continually doing good. In one of his journeys of benevolence, he went down to Nain, a city not far distant from Capernaum. As he approached the gate, he met a funeral procession; and if ever tears of unaffected anguish were shed, it was on this melancholy occasion. Behold, there was a young man carried out to be buried! This is one of those occurrences which force upon us the ungrateful conviction which we all strive to suppress, that 'man at his best estate is altogether vanity.' It is awful to see death in all his might, blasting youth and withering life, and severing the strongest ties of nature in the heart, trampling on all human power, and defying all human skill, and crushing all at a blow in the cold, and silent grave.

You that are in the morning or meridian of life, think on a lot, which may, ere long, be your own. You are now blushing in beauty; every pulse beats strong with health; your nerves are braced; your spirits are elevated; and your blood flows with a full and regular tide. Death, and judgment, and eternity, are not in all your thoughts. But did you never see the tree, full of blossoms, stripped at once, and blasted by a sudden blight. Did you never see one die in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet; when his breasts were full of milk, and his bones moistened with marrow? The morning has dawned fair on many, who, ere the evening tide, have slept the sleep of death. The hectic fever, the wasting con-

sumption, or a casual stroke, may soon enfeeble the most athletic frame, and bring down strength to the level of the grave. 'Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble, he comes forth as a flower and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not!' Perhaps some of the healthiest before me have not a year, a month, between them and judgment. Ere that period shall elapse, some of us 'may be carried out to be buried.' Whether it shall be you, or you, or you, God knoweth. 'Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh,' 'Behold I come as a thief, blessed is he that watcheth.'

The affection of a mother toward her child is proverbial.—Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? To her the heart turns instinctively in the hour of calamity, and never turns in vain. She will be alienated neither by misfortune, nor crime. She will hide the tear that moistens her cheek, lest it should seem to reproach the author of her woes.

Even a father's attachment toward his babe is great. Witness the bitterness of spirit which dictates the exclamation of the aged patriarch Jacob. 'Me have ye bereaved of my children; Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away. All these things are against me!' Witness the agony of the monarch of Israel over the untimely death of a much loved, but profligate and rebellious son. 'And the king was much moved, and went up to his chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he wept, thus he said: O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!'

Yet it is justly believed, that a mother's love is still more ardent. Almighty God has graciously rendered her duty her blessing; and reconciled her to innumerable privations and toils, from which the father is daily exempted. To this she submits with the most cheerful alacrity, and will sacrifice—what will she not sacrifice for the comfort of her babe?

Though a family be numerous, it is the first wish of a parent's heart to see them spared, and it deeply wounds, when one of them is cut down while they grow up, as olives planted around the table. But a calamity such as this paragraph records, has brought down many a parent's gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. For the young man that was carried out, was an only child—the *only son of his mother*. When the affections of the heart centre in one object, they cling to it as their all. The loss of an *only begotten* and well beloved son, is a calamity the most full of solemn and soul subduing tenderness. It is one of those strokes which penetrate to the vital seat of happiness; which blight the fairest prospects, and ex-

cite the bitterest pangs which men endure in this world of wo. It was the lot of this female, however, to experience this poignant anguish. 'To mourn for an only son, and to be in bitterness for a first born.'

The calamity was greatly aggravated by her circumstances. 'She was a widow.' Possibly she had seen happier days; her prospects were fair and cloudless; but they were soon overcast. Death entered with relentless purpose, within the pale of her domestic circle, and consigned her much loved husband to the grave. Again and again had she visited the spot endeared by a thousand tender recollections. Again and again had she wept there, until the power of weeping no longer remained. She had still, however, one earthly comfort—she had a child, an only child. With the deepest solicitude she had watched over his infancy, and superintended the education of her orphan boy. She indulged the fond hope, that the house of her husband would be built up, and that his name would be revived and perpetuated in the person of his son. The beauties of his childhood, the opening talents of his youth, and his first efforts in business, were all marked by her with exquisite delight. He grew up before her the image of his father; and with eyes glistening with tears of gratitude, she had looked upon him and said, 'this shall be the companion of my widowhood, and the staff of my declining age; when I am old and gray headed, he shall sooth my sorrow, smooth my dying pillow, and close my eyes in death.'

The heart of her child responded to her wishes. He said, 'I will be as a husband to my mother.'

My brethren, there is no security in human bliss. He died. His mother is now widowed and childless. He grew up fair and fresh as the gourd for the head of Jonah: but God had prepared a worm that smote it, and it withered. His youth struggled hard with death, and his mother clung to hope, while there was hope to cling to. Hour after hour, she sat watching his body as it hastened to decay, that feeble frame, which in infancy she had nursed with all a mother's anxieties and fears. With indescribable emotions, she watched the hourly ravages of disease, as now another and another rose fades from his cheek. It is when the weeping mother is looking for the last time, on the countenance, now faded and wasting, that the heart drinks in all the bitterness of human wo.

The current of life is fast ebbing away; the eye that once sparkled with vivacity, is now covered with the film of death; ere long its light shall be extinguished, for a moment it brightens, joy sparkles in it. Welcome death and glory; farewell world of wo: farewell, mother, dear to my heart: I go to my Father, and your Father—to my God and your God. Living,

I served you,—dying, I leave you—and in eternity I will meet you. I die, but God will be with you. His tongue, about to become silent in death, faltered, while giving utterance to his last words; a languid colour reddened his cheek, as he spake, a smile brightened faintly in his eye: as he gazed at her it grew dim—it fixed—it closed. The last breath is drawn—the last pulsation has beat—the spirit is gone. Those eyes, which, ere while, gazed on his mother in fond affection, are now sunk in their sockets; the nerveless hands so closely locked in hers, can no longer retain her affectionate grasp, that heart which sympathized in all her joys and griefs, is now indifferent alike to every fluctuation of fear and of hope.

The distressed feelings of the widowed mother, who can describe? With emotions which cannot be uttered in words—with emotions which the heart only can record, she looked upon the cold and feelingless remains of her son—her only son whom she loved. A few days before, she had seen him young, virtuous, and happy. You who are parents will judge of her felicity then. You who have been rendered childless, will judge of her affliction now. She who, yesterday, rejoiced in the accomplishments and caresses of her son, 'now refuses to be comforted, because he is not.' But words were not designed to express the agonies of a fond mother, who finds herself husbandless and childless, in the solitude and dreariness of domestic desolation.

My imagination pictures it to me—the trembling step and faded form of the bereaved widow, as she goes forth to lay in the grave, her last child, and her last hope. The object of her affection has been removed from her sight, but cannot be torn from her heart. His excellence lives there, deeply chronicled in her bosom; and the thought that she shall never see him more, touches every spring of painful sensibility, and to her soul says unutterable things. 'Oh! that it were with me as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shone upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of the Lord was upon my tabernacle; when the Almighty was yet with me, and when my children were about me; when I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil.' 'Call me not Naomi; call me Marah, for the Lord hath dealt very bitterly with me.'

The whole city had crowded spontaneously to mingle their sighs with the widow's tears. They were conducting the lifeless body to its long home. At this moment the friend of sinners met the funeral procession. Amid the group of mourners, he knew that there was one bleeding heart, and he long-

ed to bind it up. With the tenderest sympathy he approached the sufferer; and in the kindest accents said unto her 'Weep not!' There was something about his manner which showed that he was a being of a purer world. Having roused her from the stupor of grief, he touched the bier on which the dead was laid, and said, 'Young man, I say unto thee, arise.' At the sound of his Almighty word, the body, which was about to be consigned to the cold grave, begins to glow with renewed animation, the blood again flowed through the swelling veins; the bosom heaves; the heart beats, the pale cheek warms with returning life; and the eye, once closed in death, opens, and is instinctively fixed on his mother.

To her bosom the Saviour restored him. And how precious the unexpected present was, can only be conceived by that mother who has seen all the blossoms of life fading and falling; and who, after shedding tears of anguish over her only son, receives him, 'against hope,' raised up from the very verge of the tomb.

Nature, lately labouring under a load of sorrow, is now ready to sink under an excess of joy. She did wisely in not attempting to express her gratitude. At such a moment, her heart must have been too full for utterance. There are certain situations which defy description—there are certain emotions which silence only can explain; and on the present occasion how eloquent is silence.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is immutable. He retains the same compassionate feelings, now that he sits enthroned in glory, as when on earth he healed, by a miracle, the broken spirit of this forlorn widow. 'He knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust.' 'For we have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted as we are; yet without sin,' that he might know how to succour them that are tempted.

We proceed now to the second object of our method, which was to accommodate those gracious words to the situation of mourners in Zion, and would address them—

1st. To those who are ready to despair of God's pardoning mercy.

Of all the sorrows which ever broke the human heart, that which originates from the conviction of guilt, is the most pungent and afflictive. Within the narrow circle of our own observation and experience, we have met with some very afflictive instances of this description. We have seen individuals—and those too, distinguished for the purity of their morals, filled with the most dreadful perturbation, and alarm under a consciousness of deep depravity. The awful picture drawn by Job and David, of their own condition, seemed most de-

scriptive of their circumstances. 'The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit. The terrors of God do set themselves in array against me. Thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore; there is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger, neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my sin.'

We have seen individuals admitting, 'that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin'—that he is able to save to the uttermost, all who come unto him; and yet, in defiance of all these concessions, pertinaciously refusing to admit the justness of the inference, that consequently their situation cannot be hopeless and desperate. It is true, Christ can make me clean, but he will not. I am too polluted and worthless to be forgiven. I am condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on me. To pray is worse than useless—it is criminal. I cannot be otherwise than miserable.

Thus tossed from wave to wave, they are on the eve of abandoning all hope. They indulge the fearful conclusion, that their sins are too numerous, and too aggravated to be forgiven them.

If there be any in this assembly thus afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted, we would say to them in the words of our Lord—'Weep not.' Your sorrow for sin cannot be too pungent; nor your self-abasement too deep. But neither can you magnify too much, the riches of sovereign grace, nor confide too implicitly in the promises of the gospel. The mercy of Jehovah is unbounded. The merit of the Redeemer is infinite. The agency of the Holy Ghost is omnipotent. To presume that their influence cannot reach you, is to dishonour God's clemency, and to discredit his word. Never until you abandon hope, does your situation assume a desperate aspect. It is not the strength and virulence of the distemper, but the obstinate rejection of the antidote, which renders your case hopeless. 'The Son of man came into the world to save sinners!' 'Not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.'

Through him salvation is proffered to the most criminal of human beings. Sinners, whatever may have been their characters, have a complete warrant to accept it. It is their crime—the greatest of all their crimes, to refuse it. Were it the reward of merit, your objections would be unanswerable, your difficulties insurmountable. But in the forgiveness of sin, you are not the objects of reward, but of mercy. 'God justifieth the ungodly.'

We readily admit that you are a worthless and impure sinner—meriting nothing but the damnation of hell. The Bible tells you this. Satan tells you this. Conscience tells you this.

But in opposition to the despairing suggestions of Satan and conscience, we tell you upon the authority of Him, 'who is exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto Israel and the forgiveness of sins,' that though all the enormities of Manasseh, all the blasphemies of Saul of Tarsus; in short, all the guilt of all the different criminals which have hung upon the gibbet since time began its course, met in thy single person, so as to constitute thee a monster in iniquity: yet all this accumulated transgression would be no more to the infinite merit of the Redeemer's blood, than the smallest cloud to the sun's meridian lustre; than a drop to the ocean, than a particle of sand to the globe. 'The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin!' 'He is able to save unto the uttermost, all who come unto God by him.'—'The Spirit and the Bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely!' 'I, even I, am he that blotteth out your iniquities as a cloud, and your transgressions as a thick cloud!' 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out!' These are the words of God who cannot lie. And if his word be not sufficient to induce you to believe him; behold him stooping to accommodate himself to your weakness, and adding the sanction of his oath to the solemnity of his promise:—'Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise, the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it with an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us!'

Thousands, in all ages, whose case was worse than yours, have been pardoned and sanctified and glorified. They, too, questioned the ability and willingness of Jesus to save them. But the voice of his gracious gospel calmed the tumult of their heart. 'When the Lord turned back the captivity of Zion we were as men that dreamed: then our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with singing.' The awful torment of eternal woe, which haunted their imaginations, were succeeded by a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The slave who leaps exulting as the last link of his debasing vassalage is broken; the criminal, who expects in horror the execution of the fatal sentence, but is unexpectedly saluted with a pardon as he ascends the drop, feels little, compared with what those feel who have been raised from the gates of hell, by the very arm which they expected would have thrust them into unmingled and never ending woe. Joy and gratitude, as ardent as swelled the bosom of the widow of Nain, when her beloved son was restored to her fond embrace,

pervades his soul, to whom Jesus has said in his mercy, 'Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.' 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits! who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases! who redeemeth thy life from destruction! who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies!' "

The words are addressed in like manner in the subsequent part of the discourse, to those who are sighing over the desolation of christian friends; and to those who are alarmed at the prospect of their own death. But I will copy no more, as the above may serve as a specimen of the author's method of preaching. The volume contains twenty-three sermons rather of a miscellaneous character. There is one on the Pharisee and the Publican; one on the parable of the rich fool, whose grounds brought forth plentifully; One on Death on the pale horse; One on preaching; and another on hearing the gospel; Two on Divine forgiveness; One on leaving all to follow Christ; and another on Christ's coming to seek the lost; Two on early piety; Two on carnal security; One on the felicity of the heavenly state; and a few on other subjects.

Miscellaneous.

EQUAL RIGHTS, AND RELIGIOUS DUTIES.

In consequence of some late remarks by an editor of a political paper in an adjoining State, in which remarks he censures us for doing what has been done *very generally* by editors of religious publications without censure, we are reminded of an intention which has been for some time in existence, viz. to state explicitly some of the rights of an editor of a religious newspaper, his duty, and the duty of the people in regard to some points connected with the public affairs of the nation.

An opinion appears to prevail, that as soon as a man assumes the *sacred office* or becomes the conductor of a press devoted *more particularly* to religious purposes, that he has not the right of a common citizen, that he has no right to say any thing in regard to the public matters of the nation. Now let it be inquired, How does he loose his right? If he had the privilege of an ordinary citizen previously to engaging more especially in religious employments, those privileges are not taken away by the nature of his occupation. He is still subject to taxation. He is still amenable to the community for his conduct, and liable to punishment, in case of transgression of the laws. His individual interests, and the interests of his family and connexions are concerned in the movements

of the nation. As a constituent part of community, he is still liable to partake in the judgments, which a *righteous Providence* sometimes causes to fall upon nations for their crimes. How then, or when, does he loose his right, or why should he loose all interest in every transaction of the government?—"Is it such a sin to become a minister" that he who does, should be virtually disfranchized? Does the occupation disqualify him from judging correctly in regard to *temporal affairs*? It may be replied that his duties are of a higher and more responsible nature than those of ordinary citizens, and are sufficient to occupy all his time. It is admitted that they are. But this admission does not take away from a minister or editor *the rights* of a common citizen, nor can it deprive him of all interest in the public affairs. Sometimes religious duties are connected with them, we therefore notice, and insert the principal secular occurrences of the nation, believing it the duty of *every minister*, and of *every private Christian*, and of *every man* to know in what state the nation is, what are its transactions, and what are the transactions of the world. It is not possible to perform all the duties of a Christian, without such knowledge.

But do some ask, Is it expedient for a minister, or an editor of a religious paper, *tenaciously* to exercise his right of a common citizen? I answer, it is the most prudent course in *most cases* to yield the exercise of it. It is so, in *all cases* where he is likely to be considered as leagued with a party to promote political purposes. At no time, had he better support the cause of *any individual*. But is he to advocate no fixed principles, which relate to the nation, of which he is a member. The Bible speaks of the duties of rulers, and of the ruled. It describes what rulers should be, what nations may expect who are governed by unrighteous men; it calls upon the 'watchmen to lift up their voice,' and condemn wickedness in high places. Fixed principles then he ought to have, and one should be, to quell *party spirit*, because it generates slander, hatred, variance, disturbs the peace of the community, and unfits for the worship of God. Against these things, a minister ought to preach and publish, let his *just remarks* censure whom they may. Let *all of every party* who feel themselves reprov'd, take the reproof. If that which is part of 'the council of God' bears directly upon some, let them conform to it.

It ought to be a settled principle with the Christian, to urge the necessity of morality, of a regard to the laws of God, in those who bear rule in the land. His principles ought not to change with *parties*. They should be immutable. He should from *year to year* urge the necessity of such men being elected to office,

as fear God, such as will not dishonour the nation, and bring down the judgments of heaven. If at any time these principles condemn the character, or operate against the cause of a profligate candidate for office, of this denomination or that, of this party or that, very well. Let him reform. Such is the duty, in our opinion, of a minister, or an editor of a religious newspaper. And it is a plain course. But do any say you claim great privileges for these persons. No greater, in regard to the things specified, than I would for any common citizen. The same principles ought to be advocated in the Senate Chamber, on the Bench, at the Bar, in every newspaper and every social circle. Those who advocate them ought not to be charged with being religious aspirants, *any more* than the manufacturer who watches the manufacturing interests of the country, should be charged with monopolizing. Not so much, for self-interest is not so intimately at stake. The manufacturer believes it is for his interest and for the welfare of the country, that the manufactures should be supported. He lays down his principle and says 'I will vote for no man who is not a friend to manufactures.' A man who thinks as he ought to do, says, 'I believe the interests of morality and religion ought to be promoted by the *example* and *conduct* of rulers, and I will vote for no man who is not moral or religious.' Here the latter lays down his principle also, and ought he to be charged with *treasonable designs*, any more than the former? By no means. But do any ask, would you support a man for office, however ignorant or incapable, merely because he was moral or religious, and in preference to one intellectually qualified; but who was addicted to some of those *little failings*, such as intemperance, profanity, or gambling. I answer, I would support neither, but would select a man who had intellectual, moral and civil qualifications for office. If one candidate is somewhat inferior to another, in political qualifications, but superior in moral, it is better to trust to him that *takes counsel of the Almighty, than to him that leans upon his own understanding.*

Unless rulers and people are willing to practice upon Christian principles, we ought not to be called a Christian nation, and we are not unless we do. If we are not Christian, we are not Jewish, nor Mohammedan, nor Pagan. If none of these, the only *possible* appellation that we can assume, is that of Infidel. If this is to be our character, let it be written in letters of "Corinthian brass," on the dome of the capital at Washington—TO THE INFIDEL NATION OF THE UNITED STATES, that posterity may know what we were, and the cause of our ruin. But Christianity has *again* and *again* been so far declared, both *legislatively* and *judicially*,

to be part of the *common law* of the land as to control a man's external conduct, if not his belief, and this we trust no municipal laws will ever controul in this land. But notwithstanding it has been so declared, men are elected to make, and execute the laws, who are not only entirely disbelievers in it; but disregard every principle of it in practice. We wish no 'religious test.' We do not wish Presbyterians elected to office more than others; but men who can *consistently* do their duty—we wish men to be rulers who will be 'a terror to evil doers and a praise to them that do well'—men that will exalt a nation by their righteousness, and will not bring a reproach upon it by their sins. Unless there are such men elected, almost in vain is it, that the friends of morality attempt to exert a purifying change, while those who sit in 'high seats' diffuse a pestilential influence throughout the country and mark their train by unrighteous deeds. It is for want of observance of these principles, and because *professedly moral and religious* men are carried away by party feelings, without regard to much else, that our Halls of Legislation, are for the most part filled with men that are unworthy of a Christian nation. It is true, that most of our Legislators, endeavour to maintain some rectitude of conduct, when they are among their constituents, or in public view, but we speak advisedly, (yet reluctantly, under a sense of duty,) and from knowledge derived from those who have been both state, and national legislators, when we say, that a *very considerable* portion of those who are found in our State and National Legislatures, are profane swearers; and another portion, persons who are immoderate drinkers of spirituous liquors; another portion, Sabbath breakers; another, gamblers; and another portion, persons who do things still worse. And ought the moral, and religious part of a community, who believe that *virtue* is the only solid basis of a republican government, to countenance and support such things in rulers? Let them sleep on, indifferent to this subject, and none dare venture to predict that the evil example and influence of those in power, will not eventually corrupt such a large portion of the *body politic*, that it will not of itself entirely fall to pieces. Let *party* and *personal* interests continue to divert the attention from the morality of rulers, and we know not how soon every bell-man in the land may prepare to sound the funeral knell of the Republic. It is high time for the Christian public to awake, pray for those in authority, read the fate of wicked nations, and the pages of Holy Writ, that denounce threats on wicked rulers, and destruction to the ruled.—*Christian Herald*.

LETTERS FROM REV. JOSEPH WOLFF.

In our number for September, says the Jewish Expositor for November, we inserted a letter from D. Barker, Esq. communicating the intelligence of an attempt having been made to poison Mr. Wolff. Several letters have been received from Mr. Wolff since, from which we subjoin extracts, one of them contains his own account of the attempt abovementioned.

May 19. Soon after I had written so far, I went to the coffee house, to converse as well with Jews as Christians, and drank a cup of coffee, (the cups here are about the size of a very old fashioned Chinese tea-cup,) in which I perceived a curious taste, I went home and felt unwell. Next morning I went again to the coffee house, to invite Greeks to the Sunday preaching, but as I was drinking another cup of coffee, I was seized with such a sickness, that I was obliged to go out, and in going home, I vomited several times, in such a manner, as left no doubt, either in my mind, or in them that saw me, that poison had been administered to me. My wife gave me castor oil, which removed the immediate symptoms; but I still suffer from the effects. There is no doubt the poison was furnished by Greeks; for, on Sunday, by permission of the bishop, (after he had given his sanction in writing to our sending the boys to the old school master,) an excommunication was read in the great church against all who should send either boy or girl to us. I am now not able to write or dictate much, but I conclude this letter with an assurance, that if I lay down my life at Jerusalem, I shall die with a shout of joy, a having been brought to the knowledge of Christ, and that he has thought me worthy of dying for his name sake.

On June 1st, he thus writes:—

Our gracious Lord having now saved me from the deadly effect of the poison which had been administered to me by the Greeks, and which almost brought me to the grave, I must here express my public obligation to the Superior of the Catholic Convent, who sent his physician to me immediately, and whose medicine did a great deal of good.

The report which the Jew Amzalack is spreading abroad, that I had bewitched several Jews, among whom he was one, whom I had bewitched so that he became quite mad, has had a great effect, so that the Jews scarcely dare sit near me, or to touch me, fearing lest the effect of witchcraft should come over them.

I intend, therefore, to leave Jerusalem after a few weeks, for some time, and go with Lady Georgiana to Alexandria, and perhaps come back to Jerusalem after a year. I never had such a trying time during the whole eight years of my missionary labours, as I have now. Letters of Jews come against me from Odessa, London, Persia, Constantinople, and other places.

THE INFIDELITY OF THE AGE.—The infidelity of the age is not like that which once arose, with daring front, and lifted high its arm, railed out aloud its blasphemies against Jehovah, threatening, by its own might, to exterminate from earth every vestige of Christianity. When the walls of Zion thus were stormed, there were not wanting men, who, girt with armour of ethereal temper, stood ready to repel the rude attack. They acted well their part.—But now infidelity has changed its position, and its aspect has assumed the name and the garb of Christianity, has entered into the sanctuary, has taken into its hand the book of God, with the contents of which it has become familiar, and with ingenuity more than human, has diverted the precepts of truth from their real intent, and has clothed error in a form that seems to be divine.

This is an infidelity, which in its external aspect is very amiable. It calls forth respect, by the apparent candour, and the liberality of its spirit. It challenges no open opposition. It is wily and ingenious, and difficult of attack. It glories in the pride of learning, in its lofty fellowship with the style, the spirit, and the genius of ancient Prophets and Apostles; and while its principles are all congenial with its own depraved feelings, like the arch tempter of our Saviour, it relies for the success of its argument upon its appeal to the authority of God himself.—*Amer. Bap. Mag.*

COMING TO THE POINT.—The following petition, copied from the *Western Intelligencer*, comes directly to the point, at which all similar petitions should aim.

The editor of the *Philadelphian* respectfully enquires of Col. R. M. Johnson, of the Senate of the United States, if he did not know of the law of Congress, which positively requires Post Masters to deliver letters and papers on the Sabbath, when he presented his report? If he did not know of it, ought he not in candour to acknowledge it now, and move for a repeal of that law, so far as it goes to legislate at all about labour on that day?

Petition to Congress.

To the Honourable, the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled:—

The petition of the undersigned, citizens of the United States, residing in the county of Portage, and State of Ohio, would humbly represent, that by a statute law of the State of Ohio, it is enacted, "That if any person of the age of fourteen and upwards, shall be found on the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday, Sporting, Rioting, Quarreling, Hunting, Fishing, Shooting, or at common labour, (works of necessity and mercy only excepted,) he or she shall be fined in a sum, not exceeding five dollars, nor less than one dollar; provided, nothing herein contained shall be construed to extend to those who do conscientiously observe the seventh day as the Sabbath, nor to prevent families emigrating, from travelling, watermen from landing their passengers, superintendants or keepers of toll bridges from tending the same, or ferry-men from conveying over the water, travellers, or persons removing with their families, on such day."

Your petitioners would further represent, that, by the law of Congress requiring the mail to be transported, and Post Offices to be opened, and letters and packages to be delivered, on the first day of the week, many of the good citizens of Ohio are reduced to the painful necessity of violating, either the law of Congress, or that of the state of Ohio, or the solemn dictates of their consciences; or of abandoning their employment to those who are less anxious to preserve and obey the state authority.

Your petitioners would further represent, that they understand, (and rejoice in it,) that Congress has no power to make religious establishments; and therefore ask for no law for any such purpose; nor yet for any law that will interfere with individual rights of conscience: but understanding also, that Congress can make no law "prohibiting the free exercise of religion," your petitioners simply ask the repeal of that part of the Post Office law now complained of, which infringes, so extensively, the individual rights of conscience, and bears, so heavily, upon the civil rights of all that numerous class of citizens who regard the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath.

THE AGE OF MIRACLES RETURNING.—Under this caption, a correspondent of the *Richmond Visitor and Telegraph*, gives an account of a sermon he heard lately in North Carolina, in which the preacher claimed what amounted to working miracles. One of the cases is stated thus:

"A lady had kept her bed sometime through severe sickness and extreme debility of body. I preached to her the efficacy of faith in order to her immediate restoration. She forthwith arose from her bed and pranced [this was the word used] several times round the room!"

The writer says, "The above voucher of miracles is a popular speaker, and called a 'mighty fine preacher.'" If such men can get hearers and followers, a Mahometan or even a Pagan need not anticipate much difficulty in making proselytes in the United States, and in the nineteenth century. How absurd to say, "We need not be under any apprehensions from error, for we live in an enlightened age, and in an enlightened country."

MOURNING APPAREL.—It is but a few years since we first heard a question raised as to the propriety of wearing a *particular colour* to evince our respect for the memory, and our regret for the loss of relatives. Indeed, the first time

our attention was called to reflect upon the propriety or impropriety of the practice, was our seeing a venerable and devoted minister of the Baptist denomination refuse to wear any badge, other than that of the deepest sorrow depicted on his countenance, on the death of a favourite son, just at the time he was to have been married. The son had put on the apparel of the grave, instead of that prepared for the bridal festival. We were surprised to see the father and family appear at the funeral *unadorned* with the usual dress or badges of mourning. This led us to enquire into the reasons for such a wide departure from long established custom. But a very short examination satisfied us that the Elder was in the right. That the house of mourning is not the place, nor the hour when our departed friends are dressed for the narrow house, the time, to prepare new apparel for a family, and that too to evince respect and sorrow, when these will be manifest by our acts and appearance, if they exist, and if they do not, neither black nor white can palm their counterfeit, as genuine, upon the discerning observer.

We do not purpose to go into the merits of this subject at present, but rather introduce it to call attention to it, and to *invite discussion*. It is time it was thoroughly examined. If the practice of our fathers has been wrong in this respect, let the reasons be shown, and let us set a better example to our posterity.—*Rochester Obs.*

PSALMODY IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.—A committee of the General Assembly has been for several years engaged in preparing a collection of psalms and hymns, for the use of the Presbyterian church, and last May reported that they had completed the selection. The Assembly referred back the selection for further revision to the same committee; and persons who should examine this work, (1500 copies having been printed,) and would suggest improvements and corrections, were requested to address their communications to the Assembly's Stated Clerk, within six months.

It was expected that after this work had been submitted to the inspection of members of our church, and suggestions as to improvements, &c. requested, that the committee would be able so to perfect the whole selection, as to secure its adoption by the Assembly, and its recommendation by our churches next May.

Now, as many of our congregations are in need of Psalm and Hymn books, and as I have heard some enquiry of late as to what books they had best purchase, (whether Watts, Dwight, or Worcester,) and as I have recommended the Assembly's selection, I would enquire through you, of the Rev. Doctor Ely, the Stated Clerk of the Assembly, whether it is Probable that the work now in the hands of the committee of Psalmody, will be perfected and ready for delivery next summer?

Yours,

DAVID.

Roch. Obs.

GEORGIA SLAVES.—A law has just been enacted by the State of Georgia, which prohibits the teaching of any "slave, negro, or free person of colour, to READ, or to WRITE, either in *written* or *printed* characters, under penalty of *fine, whipping, or imprisonment* at the discretion of the court." Should a *white* person be engaged in so nefarious a transaction, such person is liable to \$150 fine, and imprisonment in the common jail.—*Jour. of Com.*

ECCLESIASTICAL RECORD.

On the 28th of October last, Rev. James P. Miller was installed in the pastoral charge of the Associate Congregation of Argyle, by the Associate Presbytery of Cambridge. Sermon by Rev. A Whyte, Sen. from 1 Cor. iii. 11.—Charges by Rev. A. Gordon.

At a meeting of the same Presbytery, held at Cambridge, Nov. 5th, Mr. John G. Smart was ordained to the office of the holy ministry. Sermon by Rev. J. P. Miller, from Acts, i. 9. latter clause. Charge by Rev. A. Gordon.